



What is the DCLG?

The National Cancer Institute (NCI), the Federal government's primary agency for cancer research, launched a landmark initiative, the Director's Consumer Liaison Group (DCLG) in December 1997. The DCLG is NCI's first and only *all-consumer* advisory body. It makes recommendations to the Director of NCI from the consumer advocate perspective on a wide variety of issues, programs, and research priorities.

As a high-level advisory body, the DCLG works with the NCI to help the Institute increase its involvement with the cancer advocacy community. Together they ensure that those who experience the burden of cancer also help to shape the course of NCI's efforts to eradicate this disease. The DCLG also provides the cancer advocacy community with a channel to voice their opinions and concerns.

What is the purpose of the DCLG?

The purposes of the DCLG are:

- To establish and maintain strong collaborations between NCI and this community to reach common goals;
- To provide recommendations to the Director of NCI in response to specific advice and requests from the Director and to the needs of the cancer advocacy community;
- To serve as a primary forum to discuss issues and concerns and exchange viewpoints that are important to the broad development of NCI program and research priorities;
- To assist in developing and establishing processes and criteria for identifying appropriate consumer advocates to serve on a variety of NCI program and policy advisory committees.

Who makes up the DCLG?

The DCLG reflects the diversity of those whose lives are affected by cancer. Members include cancer advocates and survivors, family members, and health care professionals. Each member is part of a constituency of people affected by cancer. These constituencies are as diverse as the group members themselves.

DCLG members represent a variety of cultural and ethnic populations. Members are both men and women who represent a broad range of cancer sites and types. DCLG members come from grassroots organizations in small rural communities, cancer-specific foundations, large national organizations, statewide agencies, and organizations dedicated to minorities and other underserved segments of the cancer community. Each member brings a unique focus and contribution to fulfilling the mission of the DCLG.

Who is eligible to be a member of the DCLG?

A member of the DCLG must:

- Be involved in the cancer experience as a cancer survivor, a person affected by the suffering and consequences of cancer, or a professional/volunteer who works with survivors or those affected, and
- Be part of a constituency (formally or informally), communicate with them regularly on cancer issues, and be able to serve as a conduit for information both *to and from* the constituency, and
- Additionally, DCLG members must be committed to participating in all activities of the DCLG to include at least two meetings in the Washington, D.C. area and telephone conferences as needed.

How does the official selection process take place?

The annual application period is announced to a broad range of groups and individuals. All applicants who meet the minimum eligibility requirements are assessed further based upon the criteria listed below. A list of highly qualified candidates is forwarded to the NCI Director. The NCI Director makes the final selection of candidates with the goal of creating a DCLG that reflects the breadth and diversity of all persons affected by cancer. The number of candidates selected is a reflection of the number of new members needed to maintain a total DCLG membership of 16 consumer advocates.

What are the criteria used to assess eligible candidates during the official selection process?

Applicants to the DCLG who meet the minimum eligibility requirements are further assessed based on the following criteria:

- Cancer advocacy experience
- Possession of strong leadership, communications, and collaboration skills.
- Ability to represent/advise on broad, crosscutting cancer issues.
- Ability to facilitate dialogue between NCI and the Cancer Advocacy Community.

What is the DCLG currently working on?

The NCI Director has asked the DCLG to advise him in three priority areas:

- Minority Recruitment and Patient Outreach – The DCLG will assist in translating for NCI, and bringing to NCI, the perspective of the cancer advocacy community. DCLG is represented on the Clinical Trials Advisory Committee.
- Cancer Care Delivery – The DCLG is participating in the NCI Community Cancer Centers Program (NCCCP) pilot as part of the group who advises and directs the program and provides ongoing feedback to the Director about the community realities of this pilot program.
- Eliminating Cancer Health Disparities – NCI is committed to eliminating cancer health disparities. Programs and policy approaches have been developed at the NIH, NCI and NCI Division levels. The DCLG is developing the consumer advocates perspective on this important topic.

In the past the DCLG has focused on building bridges between the advocacy community and NCI. The DCLG was a full partner in the development of the *NCI Listens and Learns* pilot website. The DCLG also hosted the first summit for the advocacy community at NCI: *Listening and Learning Together, Building a Bridge of Trust*. For more information visit <http://advocacy.cancer.gov>.

For additional information about the DCLG visit <http://dclg.cancer.gov>

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Related Topics

The NCI's Office of Advocacy Relations supports the Institute's research and related programs by fostering strong communications and relationships with the cancer advocacy community, professional societies, scientific organizations, and Federal Agencies. For further information on other programs and partnerships coordinated by this office visit <http://advocacy.cancer.gov>.

To receive news tailored to the cancer advocacy community subscribe to OAR's biweekly e-newsletter - NCI Nealon Digest. To subscribe: e-mail listserv@list.nih.gov, and type "subscribe cancer-advocates" in the body of the message.

National Cancer Institute Resources

NCI Cancer Bulletin

Subscribe to the NCI Cancer Bulletin to get the latest news from NCI
<http://cancer.gov/ncicancerbulletin>

Cancer Information Service

Toll-free: 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237)
TTY (for deaf and hard of hearing callers): 1-800-332-8615

NCI Online

Internet

Use <http://www.cancer.gov> to reach NCI's Web site

LiveHelp

Cancer Information Specialists offer online assistance through the [LiveHelp](#) link on the NCI's Web site.